



STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE

MAYOR

*100 Holliday Street, Room 250  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202*

January 28, 2013

Knut Frostad  
CEO  
Volvo Ocean Race S.L.U.  
Muelle nº10 de Levante, Puerto de Alicante  
03001 Alicante  
Spain

Dear Mr. Frostad:

On behalf of the City of Baltimore, I write to thank you for selecting our great City to serve as the United States host port for the 2014-2015 and 2017-2018 Volvo Ocean Races (VOR). We are extremely excited to welcome VOR back to Baltimore City.

Baltimore is committed to ensuring that this stopover is an outstanding event. I have tasked our City agencies to provide VOR with all the support necessary to ensure a great race. Both Visit Baltimore and the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts are taking lead roles in working with Ocean Racing USA to build the best American stopover ever. Our business community is energized to support the Race and the accompanying Festival. As you can see from the media coverage to date, our local and State leaders and the public are strongly behind the VOR. We will provide you with a welcome that makes you never want to leave—again.

Along those lines, I write to raise a concern with certain ongoing discussions regarding the VOR visiting Baltimore during the Preakness Stakes.

As you may not be aware, the Preakness Stakes is a 138-year-old American tradition that dates back to 1875. The Preakness is the second leg of the Triple Crown, a global horse-racing event that itself dates back to 1923. The Preakness has run on the third Saturday in May since 1931. The Preakness is a time-honored tradition and major annual event in the Baltimore area and nationally.

The Preakness draws large crowds, significant local and national sponsor participation and requires considerable support from the Baltimore and Maryland public agencies and authorities.

We want the Volvo Ocean Race to be the singular focus of the City and the region, and draw national attention, when you come to Baltimore. And we know that you and your sponsors and teams, are equally looking forward to having an energized, large-scale American stopover in a major city.

Hosting the VOR during the Preakness would directly and substantially undermine that common goal.

- Large crowds will be drawn away from your events to Preakness events. Our citizens are excited to participate in the VOR and the accompanying Festival. However, a conflict with the Preakness, a 138-year-old national treasure, will draw away from that excitement.
- During this window, hotel rooms will be in short supply and prices will be significantly higher because of the horse race. Getting in and around the City will also prove challenging for visitors. Air flights into the region will be at capacity and prices will be at a premium. All of this will reduce the number of Volvo Ocean Race visitors, both among your stakeholders and the wider public.
- Event spaces that the VOR and its sponsors will want to utilize will be pre-booked for annual Preakness events.
- Corporate sponsors have long-term standing commitments to the Preakness. Putting the Volvo Ocean Race against the Preakness will needlessly reduce the ability of the VOR local host team to raise the sponsor resources necessary to guarantee a major success. Beyond just resource issues, a conflict will reduce the energy level the business community presently feels about hosting the Race.
- City resources, ranging from marketing support to police, fire and sanitation will be diminished. This will likely force the VOR organizers to seek additional resources that on any other weekend could be provided through the City and State.

- National (and even global) media attention will be focused on the Preakness and not the Volvo Ocean Race. To give you a sense of this challenge, in 2012, NBC alone dedicated 6.5 hours of coverage to the horse race.
- Local, regional and national leaders, who would otherwise be present to salute the VOR, will face conflicts with the Preakness events.
- Supporters of the Preakness, a longstanding local tradition, will draw the wrong conclusion that Volvo is competing with the horse race. This is unfortunate because if the two races are run at separate times, strong joint marketing and outreach partnerships can be created that will benefit both events.

You selected Baltimore to host the VOR because you share our view that we are the perfect host for the VOR in the United States.

We are the best choice because we are: a major population center surrounded by other population centers; a centrally located transportation hub with easy national and international; a major media market that draws global attention; a vibrant corporate community with local companies among the Fortune 500-level; and, an energized community of local leaders and citizens excited to support the Race.

We want to provide the Race with all these benefits—the advantages that led you to select Baltimore in the first place. However, running the VOR at the same time as the Preakness will not allow us to offer you the unqualified support you deserve.

It is our understanding that, during the bid process, the Volvo representatives discussed a series of possible dates before Preakness weekend. We only heard of the Preakness weekend date within the last week.

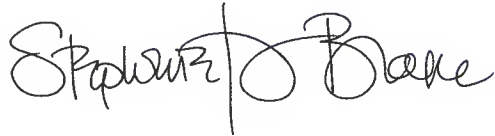
Unlike your past experiences elsewhere, Baltimore will *only* commit to an event if we are ready and able to guarantee success. And, to be clear, we cannot guarantee success, and therefore **cannot** support the VOR on Preakness weekend.

With three-years lead time, and with no firm announcements yet as to the actual Race dates, we strongly hope you will work with us and Ocean Racing USA to find a better stopover window—a window that enables the City to offer its full and complete support.

Mr. Knut Frostad  
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We could not be more excited to provide the VOR a long-term home and unequaled success in the United States. Should you have any further questions, please contact Renee Samuels, Special Assistant in the Mayor's Office at 410.396.3190 or via email at [Renee.Samuels@BaltimoreCity.gov](mailto:Renee.Samuels@BaltimoreCity.gov). On behalf of the City, we look forward to working with you to build that success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephanie Rawlings-Blake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a vertical line separating the first and last names.

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake  
Mayor  
Baltimore City

cc: Kaliope Parthemos, Deputy Chief, Economic and Neighborhood Development  
Bill Gilmore, Executive Director, Baltimore Office of Promotion and Arts  
Tom Noonan, CEO, Visit Baltimore  
Renee Samuels, Special Assistant, Economic and Neighborhood Development  
Robert Housman, Partner, Ocean Racing USA